

# Kansas Department of Health and Environment

## Bureau of Environmental Remediation, Remedial Section

### Brownfields Redevelopment Program



## Redbud Trail BTA

### Background

Since 2007 the City of Wichita has prioritized the addition of walking/bicycling trails into its regional transportation planning process. As a result, Wichita has begun building, improving, and maintaining hundreds of miles of on-street and off-street bike paths that connect central Wichita and the rest of the City with an integrated, non-motorized transportation system.

One link in the system is the Redbud Bike Trail, a 10-foot wide paved trail connecting Wichita State University to the popular I-135 bicycle corridor. The Redbud Trail is built along a railbanked railway line and provides 2.5 miles of safe transit for non-motorized traffic between the University, six city parks, and multiple employment centers.

### Investigation and Redevelopment

Because of environmental concerns related to the former railroad line, Wichita enrolled the project in KDHE's Brownfields Program in 2009. Phase I, II, and III Brownfield Targeted Assessments identified heavy metals (lead, arsenic, and cadmium) and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons above Risk-based Standards for Kansas in isolated areas of shallow soil along the bike trail.

In response, the City enrolled the site in the Voluntary Cleanup and Property Redevelopment Program. The cleanup plan



*Redbud Trail Route.*

determined that because the extent of contamination was limited to the area along the center of the former railroad track, the most cost-effective response was to cap the contaminated soil under the concrete bike path. The plan specified that the areas adjacent to the path were to be covered in clean topsoil and landscaped to prevent erosion, and any contaminated soil excavated during the construction would be evaluated and properly disposed of as a special waste. An Environmental Use Control will be applied to the site to ensure the cap is properly maintained.

To pay for the project, the City used funds from KDHE's Brownfields Cleanup and Revolving Loan Fund subgrant and also leveraged funds from a \$2.3 million federal transportation enhancement grant.

The first 2.5 mile segment of the Redbud Bike Trail was completed in May 2011. Further plans for the trail include extending it to almost 11 total miles and connecting it with other trails. The City of Wichita has applied for and received funding to evaluate other rails-to-trails projects through the Brownfields Program.

### Benefits:

- A former unused railroad corridor has now been converted to a beneficial public use.
- Residents and users of the trail are now protected from contaminated soils.
- Wichita adds to its network of biking/walking trails, providing safe, green, non-motorized transportation options.



*A completed section of trail.*